



VA Capitol Health Care Network (VISN 5) PLANNING INITIATIVES OVERVIEW

December 2002

WHAT ARE CARES PLANNING INITIATIVES?

“Planning Initiatives” are the gaps between the services we provide now and the projected services we will need to provide in the years 2012 and 2022. It is important to remember that Planning Initiatives are not decisions and not plans; they simply identify gaps in services. Plans will be developed as we analyze the gaps and decide the best approach to meeting those projected needs for the future. Planning Initiatives for all of the VISNs can be viewed at <http://www.va.gov/cares/>.

BACKGROUND

As you know, VISN 5 identified 3 Market Areas (Baltimore, Washington and Martinsburg) that have sufficient population and geographic size to benefit from coordination and planning of health care services through either VA facilities, DoD or private sector facilities, to support a full health care delivery system (i.e. primary care, mental health care, inpatient care, tertiary care, if available, and long term care). CARES Planning Initiatives represent the gaps between the current supply of services and predicted future workload demand within each market area.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

For the next few months, each of the three markets will develop market plans to deal with the gaps and identify strategies for meeting the projected demand in their particular market. The three market teams will come together to develop and finalize a VISN plan to meet all identified planning initiatives. During this process, the VISN and medical centers will be conducting briefings with employees, veterans service organizations, affiliates, union leaders, congressional representatives, and other stakeholders as they develop ideas and recommendations. In February 2003, the VISN 5 CARES Committee will review the recommendations of the three market areas. On February 28, 2003 the VISN will forward the CARES Market Plans to the National CARES Program Office. After that, an independent national CARES Commission will hold stakeholder meetings throughout the country and review the draft National CARES Plan before a recommendation is made to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. In other words, this is a long-term strategic planning process, and nothing is final until the national plan is approved.

WHAT OPPORTUNITY IS THERE FOR STAKEHOLDERS TO HAVE A SAY IN CARES?

Throughout the development of CARES Market Plans, stakeholders (veterans, VA employees, union officials, academic affiliates, local and national elected officials, veterans service organizations, and others) will be involved through CARES briefings and solicitation of comments. Comments may be provided by mail, e-mail, phone, or at local meetings. To provide input or obtain more information about CARES, an electronic CARES comment card is available on the VISN 5 CARES Internet Web site at: www.va.gov/visn5/network/cares.htm

VISN 5 PLANNING INITIATIVES OVERVIEW, Continued

WHAT DO THE VISN 5 PLANNING INITIATIVES TELL US?

The complete list of Planning Initiatives for VISN 5 can be found on the VISN 5 Web site at: www.va.gov/visn5/network/cares.htm. If you do not have access to the Internet, contact the CARES Communication Coordinator at your local facility and a copy will be provided. When looking at the Planning Initiatives, keep in mind that the gaps identified can be projecting both increases or decreases in what is needed, and the initiatives are reflective of what the data shows. Each CARES market planning team will need to analyze the data and decide what to do with the gaps. In summary, the Planning Initiatives suggest that, at a minimum, the market teams need to develop market plans to include the following:

Baltimore Market (VA Maryland Health Care System, Baltimore/Loch Raven and Perry Point Divisions)

- Gaps in outpatient specialty care, outpatient primary care and inpatient psychiatry.
- Veterans Health Administration/Department of Defense (VHA/DoD) collaborative opportunities.
- Tertiary care proximity with VAMC Washington.
- Replace Nursing Home Care Unit at Perry Point.

Washington Market (VAMC Washington)

- Gaps in outpatient specialty care, outpatient primary care and inpatient psychiatry.
- Veterans Health Administration/Department of Defense (VHA/DoD) collaborative opportunities.
- Tertiary care proximity with VAMHCS Baltimore.

Martinsburg Market (VAMC Martinsburg)

- Gaps in outpatient specialty care and outpatient primary care.
- Veterans Health Administration/Department of Defense (VHA/DoD) collaborative opportunities.

HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

CARES information is available on the VISN 5 Internet Web site at: www.va.gov/visn5/network/cares.htm or on the National CARES Web site at <http://www.va.gov/CARES/>. If you have questions or need more information, contact the CARES Communication Coordinator at your facility:
Baltimore - Monica Smith at 410.605.7098
Washington - Michelle Spivak at 202.745.4037
Martinsburg - Barbara Corbin at 304.263.0811 x 4003
or David Edwards, the VISN 5 CARES Communication Coordinator at 410.605.7100.